



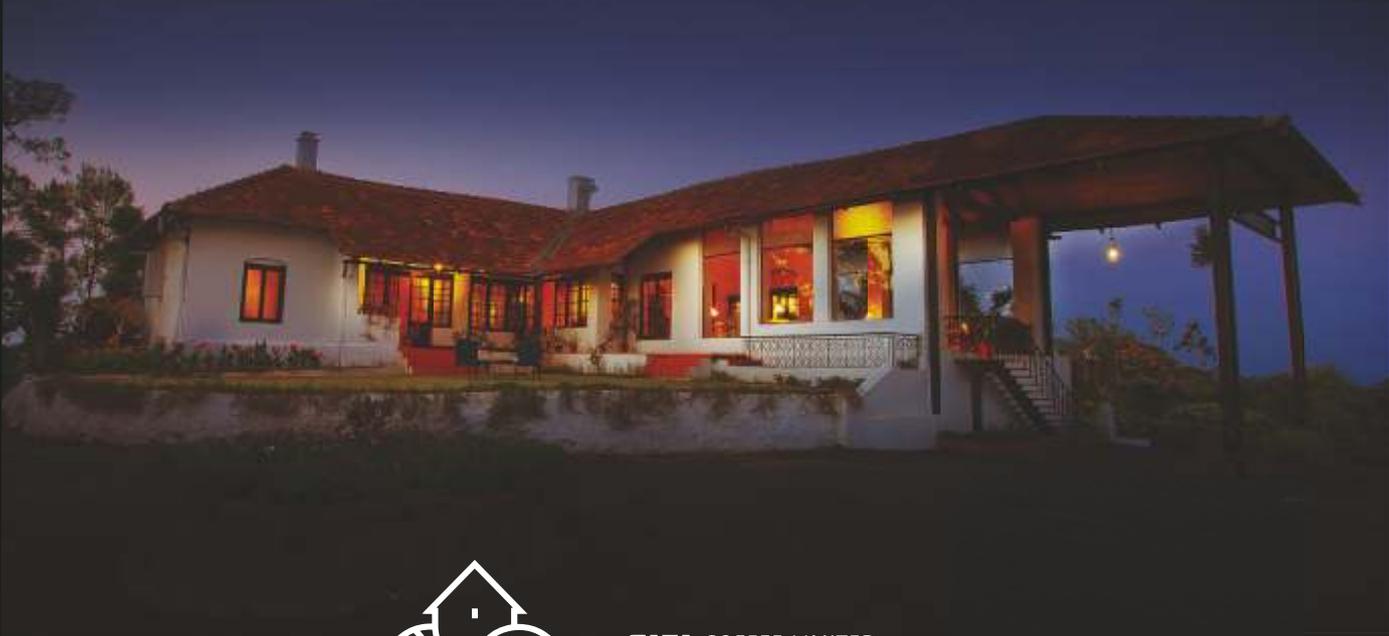
 **ELSA** |  
Lady Shri Ram College Alumni Association

**60** years  
of ELSA Effect





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## **Arun Bharat Ram**

*Chairperson, Governing Board, LSR*

It gives me great pleasure to be able to share some thoughts with the illustrious alumnae of LSR, as we celebrate our sixtieth year.

ELSAs are privileged to have graduated from a unique institution that has valued intellectual and academic rigour. It has been at the forefront of social change and generation of new ideas even, as it engages consistently with the great issues of our times.

ELSAs have always been high achievers professionally, carving out a special niche in their workplaces and society.

The values of inclusiveness that have imbued the ethos of our college, I believe, has enabled this.

But what is important to recognise is that LSR has not been a college, that is narrowly selective in catering only to the Creme de la Creme of society. From the time of my grandfather, Sir Shriram the Founder, the philosophy of the college has been to provide young women from all walks of life education of the highest quality.

Our diversity and heterogeneity has been our greatest strength. The fact that we have been able to nurture a sense of community, ownership and pride in the college is truly gratifying. Our rich diversity has provided students to feel what real India is. The college

is no longer Delhi-centric, but includes students from all corners of the country, across conventional fault lines of class, caste, religion or ethnicity, even nationality. There remains a unified sense of purpose and commitment to nurture women leaders in all walks of life and a collaborative endeavour to realise this. The fact that we continue to excel in academics, extracurricular activities, in sports and, are rated as the best college year after year, is testimony to this spirit that believes in the potential of the transformative role of education for women ELSAs. Our college has been in existence for exactly 60, and we have about 30,000 students who have graduated from the portals of this remarkable institution. Yet, if there has been one weakness in our alum association, it has been our inability to organise ourselves into a smooth, well functioning body. I believe that a good beginning has now been made by dedicated alumnae to set up an office, create a constitution, establish best practices, to enable alumnae to participate, be engaged with the Alma Mater, and be able to get regular updates on the progress of the college. The manner in which the alum office will function will enable all ELSAs to network with one another where ever they may be located. Imagine, if you are traveling out of town or even abroad, you could network with your classmates with whom you may have been out of touch, and can reach

out to them to lend a helping hand, or just revive the nostalgia of the wonderful , carefree and energising undergraduate days.

I am glad that you are having a gala evening shortly. Many of you will be reconnecting with friends after many years. This will also be an opportunity for ELSAs to share ideas on how you could contribute to your Alma Mater. Most colleges in the world are supported by some 'Giving Back' by alumni. I can suggest that the Alum Committee reach out to all ELSAs to share their thoughts on how one could contribute to college and leverage their reputation as professionals, entrepreneurs and homemakers to initiate social change. At college the upgradation of facilities could be taken up. Scholarships for deserving students could be established. A good way to connect could be for alums to come back to college to speak with students as mentors and hold lectures on their areas of expertise.

Real-life experiences are often a great motivation for students to choose careers. Especially, since many of you have done outstanding and inspirational work.

Let me end, by congratulating the Committee on having started the process of establishing a well-thought out structure for the future of ELSA. Although, I must put in a word of caution. After many decades of experience with different organisations, I am aware that often, politics creeps into the system and even well-meaning individuals become either victims or propagators of extraneous agendas. The Association must effectively guard against this. For those who will be office bearers, they must remember that they are servants of the society, working selflessly for the greater good of their community.

At the end of the day, goodwill survives on trust, and we must all stay worthy of it.

My best wishes to a fresh start. Keep the LSR flag flying high.





Dr. H. P. Dastoor  
(1956 – 1961)



Dr. M. Koshi  
(1961 – 1967)



Mrs. L. W. Dhume  
1967 – 1968



Dr. S. M. Luthra  
1968 – 1987



Mrs. U. J. Rana  
(1987 – 1988)



## Principals



Dr. Meenakshi Gopinath  
(1988 – 2014)



Dr. Suman Sharma  
(2014 – Present)



*Sir Shri Ram, Founder, LSR*

“If there was one thing dear to Sir Shri Ram's heart, it was education for women, and more education of women ”



**Dr. Homar P. Dastoor**  
*Founder Principal, LSR*



## Dr. Suman Sharma

*Principal, LSR*

*Chief Advisor, ELSA*

*Political Science (Hons), Batch of 1979*

**How was your experience at LSR as a student? How has LSR helped you later in life?**

I joined LSR four decades ago as a young, shy and diffident student. LSR provided me an excellent opportunity to grow and develop into a young confident woman, so that I could commence my teaching career at the young age of 21 years at Delhi University. What followed was a long and fruitful academic life and a teaching career which emboldened me to accept a challenging administrative assignment in Dayal Singh (Evening) College – as OSD of the College. The seeds of grit and courage sown in me during my years in LSR, provided me with the inner strength and wherewithal to shoulder this responsibility. I was destined to join my Alma Mater again when I was selected in 2015 for the post of the Principal of LSR College. It was an extremely exciting and satisfying moment for me to come back to my Alma Mater.

**How would you describe your years in LSR?**

LSR has a very creative, disciplined and conducive ambience for young girls to find themselves and acquire the empowering tools of education needed to play a significant role in society. I was committed to hard work and determined to excel as a student. I was, therefore, very fortunate to spend my most formative years in this institution. I must express my gratitude to my teachers who were an extremely dedicated lot, in not only imparting learning, but in instilling a sense of confidence and strength in me to face adversities and perform in a patriarchal society.

**Is it challenging to be the Principal of LSR?**

My present assignment as Principal of LSR is extremely challenging, at times very stressful, as the social and national context and perspective is quite different from

the one I experienced four decades ago as a student. While I inherited the institutional, inherent strength which is an asset for any administrator, the challenge of maintaining the position enjoyed by the College and further evolving as an institution of excellence in the fast changing national and global scenario in higher education, is quite a daunting task.

**What is your vision for LSR?**

I had examined the reform initiatives in higher education in India, in the year 2009, and made a presentation in Utara University, Malaysia. The national context of expansion and excellence in higher education with the core focus on inclusion, provides an excellent background for policy planners, educational administrators and academic community to evolve this mission in every nook and corner of the country. I, therefore, envisage that as an excellent institution, we will dovetail our efforts and contribute to realization of this mission objectives. The plural character of our students who come from varied social and geographical segments of our country, behoves us to provide a conducive and healthy environment for them and to make LSR a credible melting pot for the creation of empowered and socially responsible young women for the society. Further, I feel that there is an emerging need to understand new regimes of power and control created by the new technologies, particularly in the exciting cyber space, and responding appropriately to this powerful challenge and opportunity.

**What message would you give to ELSA?**

ELSA provides a proud sense of heritage of achievement and empowerment of women. It motivates and inspires young girls who join LSR to aspire and strive for higher goals in life.



## Dr. Meenakshi Gopinath

*Former Principal, LSR*

*Mentor, ELSA*

*Political Science (Hons), Batch of 1969*

Through six eventful decades of its history, LSR has celebrated the quest for expanding landscapes of learning and engagement. The journey that began in 1956 in a small school building has today acquired an impressive global footprint. Today, several universities the world over, seek collaborations and partnerships with our Alma Mater.

ELSAs, have through their work and professional impact, contributed substantially to the reputation of the college as a uniquely creative and progressive space. And for women, as not just a "room of one's own" but an alternative public sphere with its own traditions of democratic choice, inclusive dialogue and unfettered exploration.

Over the decades, LSR has meant different things to different generations of students. Breaking free of the initial parental considerations of *Ladki Seedhi Rahegi* to independently "Leverage Sensitivity with Resilience to Learn, Search and Reflect" on its *Lakshya Sadhana Rachna* and moving beyond the safe provision of the known and familiar spaces, (Let's Start a Revolution) LSR today has become a byword for **Leadership with Social Responsibility** reflecting the impact of a pedagogy that has been truly liberating for many of us.

Our alums, who in nurturing an unbroken tradition of social responsibility from Nobel Laureate Aung San Suu Kyi of Burma to the many women of substance who come together again today, have demonstrated a unique ability to give of their energies to causes larger than themselves, to provide us with valuable lessons on leadership, and on the power that bestows the courage

to sail uncharted seas and to heal our embattled world and, to heal our planet.

As we celebrate that spirit in our sixtieth year, strengthened in the belief that we have a tremendous opportunity today more than ever before, to give back to our college and to society, we look to our very own Association to facilitate pathways for collaborative initiatives to come to fruition.

We have been blessed to be a part of a college that is like no other, one that gave us the grit to venture beyond the safe provision of purely personal gratification. Let us continue to draw inspiration from our diverse, journeys of discovery, of breaking the mould and glass ceilings of sailing uncharted seas and, opening new vistas to the human spirit.

KTFF and let us keep the *bandhanon ko thodne ki hai hamaari yaatra* song in our hearts!



## Rashmi Misra

*President, ELSA*

*History (Hons), Batch of 1971*

Dear Elsas,

A warm welcome to the celebrations of the ELSA 3rd Annual Dinner!

It is a proud moment for us to be together to celebrate 60 years of LSR and the 'ELSA Effect'!

LSR is where we all blossomed from being shy young girls and metamorphosed into strong courageous women of substance with a zeal to excel. We made our best friends in those glorious three years, and were blessed and privileged to receive an outstanding education, under excellent faculty and imbibe the spirit, the magic of LSR, that set us free to dream, to achieve and to be! The LSR ethos, culture, values, vision, and commitment, is the potent magic that transformed us all. Meet an ELSA anywhere and you will find an enthusiastic, lively, positive, high achiever, blessed with intelligence, talent and charm! That is YOU and 'the ELSA Effect' that transforms whatever you do!

LSR is the best women's college in the country, and the alumni speak for themselves. There are over 30,000 of us spread all over the world, doing amazing things that are shaping lives and the world itself. From the incredible Aung San Suu Kyi to Tina Dabi – one is filled with pride and joy at the fantastic achievements of our ELSAs. Many are featured in this Commemorative Souvenir but know that every ELSA is a mover and shaker, and an amazing achiever.

ELSA, the LSR Alumni Association came into being only three years ago. The ELSA Pro Tem committee did an incredible job in setting up all the systems, connecting, networks with college and inspiring us all into action. Thank you, the Pro Tem committee, for your leadership, hard work, commitment and outstanding effort.

The 2016-17 Executive Board of ELSA is blessed and privileged to have the guidance and support of the Chairman, Shri Arun Bharatman and members of the board. We are delighted to work closely with our Chief Advisor Dr. Suman Sharma, Principal LSR, and our mentor

Dr. Meenakshi Gopinath – our role models and, a source of inspiration and support.

ELSA a volunteer body, is dedicated and committed to serve and create a movement to engage ELSAs across the globe and offer opportunities to 'Give Back' to our Alma Mater as visiting faculty, as mentors to share their expertise and inspire the students to achieve their dreams and aspirations. ELSA will connect you to the ELSA sisters across the world – no matter where you go an ELSA will be there – a friend and well-wisher who understands, supports you.

Leadership with Social Responsibility is our mantra! Many of us are creating social change as individuals. Many of us occupy positions of incredible influence and authority. Now, imagine all of us individuals united, a few thousand intelligent, determined women. Together, we can make a huge difference! We aim to be leaders who are socially responsible and be the change in the communities and cities we live in. We would like to drive a ONE ELSA Movement. ELSA is a portal to share everything. It instantly connects you to every LSR alumni, anywhere in the world – a social network like no other!

I am really proud of the incredible ELSAs of the EC and dedicated volunteers from New Delhi and from Bangalore who have worked endlessly to make this a magical event for us all.

More than anything else we would like you, ELSAs to sign up and be life members and engage and be a big part in this movement. We are what we are today, in many ways, because of what our Alma Mater and the peer group inspired us to be. It's time we gave back to college, renew old friendships, create social change with the like-minded women of substance. Each one of us can make a difference and we need your involvement and your support!

Cheers from the entire Executive Committee!



## ELSA - Lady Shri Ram College Alumni Association

### The Beginning

It was in the year 2010-11 that Dr. Meenakshi Gopinath called a few of us to LSR to recreate the Alumni magic. The President at the time was Geeta Luthra and Aditi Misra was asked to be the Vice-President.

A 5-lecture series for Women – women and law, women and the workplace, women and money, was our most significant event that year. From thereon, we created a network of like-minded ELSAs to work at creating more seminars, workshops, discussions, conferences, fairs and fetes, espousing causes and raising issues related to empowerment, environment, health, education, parenting and many others.

In 2012, Dr. Meenakshi Gopinath asked Aditi to step in as President after an election and Snimer Kaur Sahni as Secretary. Both Aditi and Snimer enrolled a group of ELSAs who would be able to contribute meaningfully to the ELSA association and to our Alma Mater. Renuka Prasad, Priti Srivastava, Vandana Kohli joined us to help build a stronger network. We organised talks, seminars, and day-long fairs in LSR.

We felt a growing need to have a formal association to reach out to the larger community of ELSAs, and

expand the vision of the group. A meeting with Dr. Bharat Ram and Dr. Meenakshi Gopinath set us on the journey. And, ELSA - Lady Shri Ram College Alumni Association was born. A Society registered under the Indian Societies Act, 1860. The 2015-17 Executive Committee is privileged to have the guidance and support of the Chairman, Shri Arun Bharatram, member of the Governing Board, Chief advisor Dr. Suman Sharma, Principal LSR, and our mentor Dr Meenakshi Gopinath – our role models, and a source of inspiration and support.

A Pro Tem committee was formed with the following members.

President, Aditi Misra  
 Vice President, Chandani Luthra  
 Secretary, Snimer Kaur Sahni  
 Treasurer, Anita Vasudev  
 Asha Mathur  
 Renuka Prasad  
 Deepa Bahl  
 Ameeta Verma Duggal  
 Saumya Vardhan  
 Priti Srivastava  
 Rekha Bajpe Agarwal  
 Annabelle Manwaring

The pro tem committee did yeoman's service by creating the Association and Bye-laws. A number of social and professional events followed – weekend stay at Vivanta, an afternoon in college on 26th January, book readings, and involvement in college events. The most important task of the pro tem committee was to create a base for the Association to move ahead and this it accomplished by organizing the first elections for the

Association in September 2015.

The 2015-17 elected ELSA Executive Committee has continued to work towards the goals set by the previous committee with the aim of expanding membership and increased participation. The highlights of the activities are listed below!

### September 2015 – 2016

#### **A) Activities in LSR**

- 1) 21 Benches were handed over to college
- 2) Scholarships to college
  - a. Sunila Awathi – Rs 100,000/-
  - b. Arshiya Sethi – Rs 15000/-

#### **B) Activities – ELSA – DELHI/NCR**

##### After Work Network Meets

- 1) New Delhi – January 15th, 2016
- 2) New Delhi – Feb 26th, 2016
- 3) New Delhi – April 1st, 2016
- 4) Gurgaon – April 20th, 2016

##### Elsa Conversations

- 1) Deepika Warriar – Gender Diversity in the Workplace, Vice-President, Nutrition, PepsiCo.
- 2) Jigyasa Taneja – Self-Esteem, Women Performers and the Use of Humour as a Transformative Tool.
- 3) Anupama Aggarwal – Add Power to Your Purse – Women & Investment.
- 4) Sandi Rich Event (From GCC)

##### Heritage Walk

- 1) New Delhi, Thread of Continuity, Exhibition on Parsi Community, IGNCA.
- 2) Introductory Walk – IGNCA.

##### Book Club Meet

- 1) Margaret Atwood – Stone Mattress.
- 2) Murakami – Norwegian Wood.
- 3) Murakami – Blind Willow, Sleeping Women.

##### ELSA Post

The first edition was launched on 5th January 2016.

### TRAVELSA – Alumni Travel Hub started in April 2016.

TRAVELSA is an opportunity for us to come together – old friends and new – and explore different destinations, share memories and create new ones, and leave an ELSA footprint wherever we go!

### ELSA HUB

A place to showcase the products and services offered by ELSA members. The friendly and informative website connects fraternity into ONE ELSA movement.

### Career Hub

Database of job postings to assist ELSAs in search of jobs.

### Connect

Networking/Breakfast/Coffee Meet

Workshops/Lecture Series/Book Club/Up-skilling & Knowledge Enhancement/ Sharing of Expertise.

### **C) Highlights from the ELSA Chapters:**

#### ELSA Bangalore

Organized several events, the highlight being the Loquacious Super Rockers talk series, bringing ELSAs together to celebrate authors and prominent women speakers.

Held several get-togethers and discussions on how we can manage waste in our communities for a cleaner Bangalore.

In 2014, noted Bharatnatyam dancer Malavika Sarukkai performed for a fundraiser that contributed to two classrooms in LSR's new wing.

Organised Sharon Prabhakar's an ELSA's performance.

Celebrated the 5<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the ELSA Bangalore Chapter – 435 ELSAs who are collectively known as the LSR mafia!

### ELSA Mumbai

Held several AfterWork Network Meets that brought the ELSA synergy together.

Conducted a well-attended Heritage Walk to Ban Ganga.

Over 100 ELSAs are a part of the group and increasing steadily.

### **The Future**

The Association is committed to serve and create a movement to engage ELSAs across the globe and offer opportunities to 'Give Back' to our Alma Mater and to support individual ELSAs and their communities in making a better world.

Our vision is the ONE ELSA Movement. An ELSA Movement where we give back to college, and connect to ELSA sisters across the world.

LSR made us into strong women of substance. We are here to serve our college and offer our knowledge and expertise to the present students, and be available to help the Principal, the administration, faculty and students.

We will continue to expand our present activities in the workshop, lecture series and sharing expertise, and upskilling.

Our plans for the year ahead are to create a network which provides professional and learning opportunities, create bonds of friendship, and offer a variety of exciting programs across ELSA Chapters in the world.

We plan to set up internships in corporate India, and in NGOs to give the LSR students a rich experience.

Our commitment is to support the girl child and women. We will continue to work towards creating a cleaner city by planting trees, working on waste management, cleaner air, and less noise pollution.

Being a MITR – a friend, a mentor, a counselor – to guide and inspire the students to manage their challenges and achieve their dreams and aspirations.

We need the alumini's participation in strengthening this ELSA movement for 'Giving Back' to create a better more equitable and peaceful world.

We are ELSAs committed to making a difference together!

Leadership with Social Responsibility is our mantra! Many of us are creating social change as individuals. Many of us occupy positions of incredible influence and authority. Imagine, if all of us unite, a few thousand intelligent, determined, passionate women. Together, we can make a huge difference! We would be the Change in the communities and the cities we live in.

Upholding the ethos of LSR:

“That alone is knowledge that leads to liberation.”

## The Executive Committee

With the blessings of the Chairman, Mr. Arun Bharat Ram and the then Principal, Dr. Meenakshi Gopinath, the ELSA Association was formed by the founding members — Aditi Misra, Chandni Luthura, Snimer Kaur Sahni, Anita Vasudeva, Dr. Asha Mathur, Renuka Prasad and Priti Srivastava. They along with Rekha Bajpe Aggarwal, Deepa Vohra Bahl, Saumya Wardhan, Ameeta Verma Duggal, Annabelle Manwaring, formed the pro tem Executive Committee to establish the foundation for a robust Association.

The first Executive Committee was elected at the Annual General Meeting on 12th September 2015. Details of the composition of the committee, eligibility, election process, term of office, responsibilities and other related matters are in the Byelaws and Memorandum of Association.

The Executive Committee is committed to serve the Association on behalf of all its members with integrity and transparency, while working towards an integrative and supportive environment.

### Executive Committee (2015-2017)



**Rashmi Misra, President**

*History Honours, Batch of 1971*

Rashmi Misra is the Founder Chairperson of VIDYA – a 30 year old non-profit organisation, dedicated to educate, empower, transform children, youth and women pan-India. Based in Bangalore, she plans to bring her experience and success in building the dynamic Bangalore ELSA Chapter into the national body of the Association so that ELSAs across the world can make a huge difference to India and the world.

**Ameeta Verma Duggal, Vice President**

*English Honours, Batch of 1989*

Ameeta Verma Duggal received a degree in law from the Delhi University after graduating from LSR. She was awarded a British Chevening Scholarship by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office to study at the College of Law, York. She worked briefly in the London office of Clifford Chance and in 2004, she founded DGS Associates, a Delhi based law firm specializing in corporate, commercial and international trade laws. Ameeta is married to Gaurav Duggal, also a lawyer, and has a daughter, Manasvini.



**Urvashi Ashta, Hony. Secretary**

*Economics Honours, Batch of 1988*

Urvashi Ashta has 14 years of experience in banking with ANZ Grindlays/ Standard Chartered Bank. She set up a wealth management company, and also worked in the HR domain. Currently, Urvashi is a Training Consultant. She enjoys art, history and travel, and believes life all about reinventing oneself at each step.

**Deepa Vohra Bahl, Honourary Treasurer**

*Mathematics Honours, Batch of 1997*

Deepa Vohra Bahl received a law degree from the Faculty of Law at Delhi University, after completing her graduation at LSR. She is a Patents and Trademarks lawyer who has completed courses from the Academy of Intellectual Property Studies and the World Intellectual Property Organization. She is well-versed and proficient with the Madrid System of International Registration of Trademarks. Deepa is the Founder and Proprietor of LEX INTELLI, Intellectual Property Attorneys & Consultants.



**Saroj Kaushal, Member**

*BA Integrated, Batch of 1965*

Presently, Director of Learning World.co.in and Excelonz.com, Saroj Kaushal had a long and interesting career in Indian Airlines (now Air India) from where she retired as General Manager, HRD. After graduating from LSR, she completed her MA in Social Work from Delhi School of Social Work, an MA in Psychology from Delhi University, and completed PG Diploma from the Indian Law Institute in Delhi.



**Gitanjali Luthra Bhalla, Member**

*Philosophy Hons, Batch of 1988*

Gitanjali trained to be a commercial pilot after her graduation but couldn't pursue it due to lack of jobs for commercial pilots at that time. She has two daughters aged 23 and 16. Gitanjali has been in the field of voluntary work for the past 9 years. She now runs her own NGO, PallCanCare, helping terminally ill cancer patients at AIIMS and other government hospitals. Besides this, she is passionate about gardening and gift-wrapping/packaging and does turnkey projects for the same. She specialises in terrace gardens and customized packaging for individuals and corporates.



**Renuka Prasad, Member**

*Political Science Hons, Batch of 1969*

Renuka completed her B.Ed once both my children started schooling. She worked in Modern School Vasant Vihar and in Delhi Public School, Vasant Vihar for a long spell. She received her M.Ed from Jodhpur where her husband was posted. That brought an end to her career as an educationist as she devoted time to the social activities associated with a senior General Officer's wife in the Army. Looking after environment while posted in Udhampur, she completed her Masters in Environmental Studies and has been working with the Indian Cancer Society, Delhi the oldest NGO associated with cancer related activities.





**Madhulika Choudhary, Member**

*Political Science Honours, Batch of 1991*

A resource consultant who has relocated to India in 2014, Madhulika Choudhary has over 14 years experience of designing and delivering projects that support marginalised and socially excluded people, both in the UK and in India. She is of the belief that the years spent at LSR have helped her to become an independent minded person, and the friends she made here helped her deal with personal and professional challenges.

**Smita Mankad, Member**

*Economics Honours, Batch of 1992*

After graduating from LSR, Smita Mankad completed her MBA from Narsee Munjee Institute of Management Studies, Mumbai University. Since then she had 20 years of work experience in the corporate sector, combining business skills and social impact interventions successfully. This included TATA Motors, ABN AMRO Bank and Fabindia and its subsidiaries. Smita is committed to social entrepreneurship at a grassroots level and to women's leadership and mentoring at a global level.



**Gayatri Srivastava, Member**

*Economics Honours, Batch of 1996*

Recipient of the Tehmina Nusserwanji Prize for GK at LSR in 1994, the Deccan Herald Award for English Journalism at IIMC (1997), the CBSE Merit Scholarship (1993), Gayatri Srivastava has numerous academic and co-curricular achievements. She is also the co-author of the book 'Family Guide to Jakarta' and has lectured at some of India's leading mass communication institutes and colleges including LSR, XIC and IIMC. Gayatri is currently based in Mumbai, and loves to travel and cook.

**Triveni Mahajan, Member**

*B.Com Honours, Batch of 1992*

A Modern School, and a Barakhamba Road alumni, Triveni Mahajan worked as a Chartered Accountant with S.B. Billimoria & Co. before she decided to pursue her creative passion. She qualified as a goldsmith from JPDC Delhi and now runs her own studio where she designs, enamels and sells her unique 'one-of-its-kind' jewelry. Triveni loves to travel and dabble with anything creative.

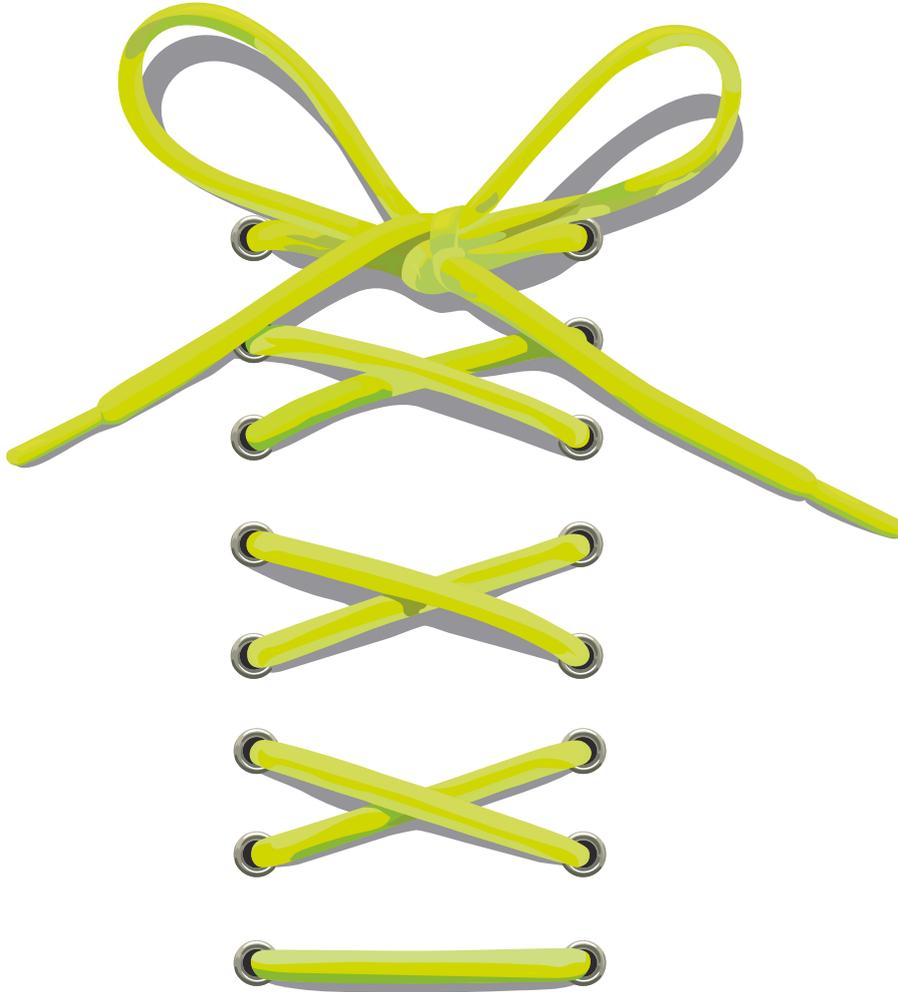


**Aditi Misra, Ex-officio Member**

*History Hons, Batch of 1982*

An Elsa and a Dipsite, Aditi has been with DPS since the past 3 decades and more. She is the Founder Principal of DPS Gurgaon. Married to a doctor, she has two children Adya and Sanat. She has been involved with LSR over the years through Nostalgia and the scholarship scheme. As the 1st President of the Elsa Association she sought to bring together a large number of Elsas into the Elsa fold! A number of innovative events were organised by the Pro Tem Committee from 2013 onwards.

# Ramp



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# ELSA Chapters



GCC Chapter



Mumbai Chapter



Bangalore Chapter

It is a common thread that binds us. The enthusiasm, the teamwork, selfless giving, trust, and warmth bridge all generation gaps and create a sense of belonging. It's the true ELSA spirit and we share that in the Bangalore chapter! It's infectious. Watch out! Guaranteed to get under your skin!



# SUJATA CHAUDHRI IP ATTORNEYS

*Sujata Chaudhri IP Attorneys is an IP boutique specializing in trade mark, copyright and design laws. Sujata Chaudhri, ELSA '91, formerly an equity partner at a prominent Manhattan law firm, founded the firm in 2014 after she relocated to India from the United States of America. The firm has a deep understanding of its clients' business needs and objectives, and strives to further them. Client relationships are of utmost importance for every attorney at the firm. The firm offers consulting and advisory services in the areas of trade mark, copyrights, industrial designs and internet law. The firm's lawyers also regularly handle civil and criminal enforcement work all over India, including in the Delhi High Court and District Courts. Overall, the firm strives to be not just a legal advisor to its clients, but also a business partner!*

# Upcoming Chapters



U.K



Singapore

## After Work Network



One of the main objectives of the ELSA Alumni Association is to build an active network of Alumni across India and the world. These networking events are held on weekends, when ELSAs unwind, socialize with fellow ELSAs while expanding their networks.

## Heritage Walks



## Book Club & Conversations



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One of the main aims of the ELSA Alumni Association is to help the ELSA alumni community. We created a platform where the alumni fraternity can advertise their products and services. It is an alumni-to-alumni forum. It is an online catalogue for alumnae-owned businesses.

Lifetime Members are eligible to feature their products and services at the ELSA HUB. There are no additional charges to list your products or services.

These are also listed on the ELSA Alumni Association Website and will be seen by all visiting the website.

No sale is transacted on the ELSA Alumni Association website. The HUB has only a facilitating and cataloguing role.

## Categories

### Accounting & Consulting

- Accounting
- Financial Planning
- Legal Services
- Tax Consulting

### Audio & Video

- Advertising Services
- Other
- Video/Film Production

### Business & Consulting

- Business Advice
- Career Advice
- HR Consulting
- Marketing Strategy

### Education & Coaching

- Career Counselling
- Others
- Tuitions

### Event Management

- Event Management Services
- Venue/Restaurant owners

### Fashion and Clothing

- Accessories
- Clothing
- Craft Supplies
- Jewellery
- Wedding

### Food & Cooking

- Cakes / Baking Services
- Catering Services
- Restaurants

### Gifts

- Corporate Gifts
- Personal Gifts
- Unusual Gifts

### Interiors & Home furnishing

- Artists & Paintings
- Home Products
- Interior Designer Services

### Lifestyle & Well-being

- Animal Care & Pets
- Astrology & Fortune Telling

- Cooking Recipes
- Counselling
- Diet & Weight Loss
- Health & Fitness
- Makeup, Styling & Beauty
- Relationship Advice
- Spiritual & Healing

### Technology - Hardware & Software

- Graphics & Design
- Hardware Products
- Online Marketing
- Other
- Support & IT
- Website Development & Tech services

### Travel

- Travel Agency
- Travel Products
- Writing & Translation
- Content Writing

# ELSAPost

ELSA Post is an invitation to alumni to send their:

- Achievements
- Meaningful journeys
- Overcoming challenges
- About their friends and families

Through sharing each other's stories, ELSAs can engage in a more meaningful way.

**VIDYA**  
August 10 at 8:01am [Like Page](#)

<https://www.globalcitizen.org/.../rashmi-misra-vidya-school-.../>



**After Finding Girls in 'Flowing Sewage,' This Woman Built a School**

This is the story of how Rashmi Misra started a school for slum children in India.

GLOBALCITIZEN.ORG

[Love](#) [Comment](#)

You, Triveni Mahajan, Madhulika Choudhary and 56 others

French journalist Marjorie Cessac in conversation with notable ELSA (UK), Lady Kishwar Desai on the rape crisis in India



**"A generation of marginalized, politically exploited youth are driving rape crisis in India." - UKAsian**

In what has become a distressingly familiar routine, there was fresh outrage in India last month after a young student was gang-raped by five men who had also raped...

UKASIAN.COM

[Like](#) [Comment](#) [Share](#)

Madhulika Choudhary and 6 others

**Priti Srivastava**  
July 29

Three cheers! for Parampara Thakur, ELSA for her first bollywood playback song.



**AYE KHUDA Love in Malaysia**

Love in Malaysia - Ibaadat song 'Aye Khuda' sung by Parampara Thakur. Music - Budhaditya Mukherjee / Jecin George Lyrics- Asif Khan Singer- Parampara Thakur...

YOUTUBE.COM

[Like](#) [Comment](#) [Share](#)

Triveni Mahajan, Snimer Kaur Sahni and 26 others

**Reema Ahmad**  
July 30

My first session on Child Sexual Abuse Awareness for adults. It was at LSR that I realised the enormity of what had happened to me when I was abused as a child. It was LSR that gave me the insight into healing, recovery and most importantly, paying it forward. It has been nearly 12 years since I left college but the courage that I found there has continued to help me up in my darkest hours.  
Yay Yay LSR!!  
Always and forever 😊



[Like](#) [Comment](#)

# Special Thanks

# SHEROES<sup>.in</sup>

## T A K E C H A R G E

A platform for women with ambition and aspirations, SHEROES offers a career world with opportunities, high growth career resources, mentorship, skills and support. A community built around principles of learning, growth and sharing, the members access most diverse work formats, including corporate jobs, returning professionals programs, partner programs, work from home jobs, part time work, freelancing, franchising, mompreneur and internship programs. We partner with over 12000 organizations to help them connect with female talent in form of employees, partners and customers. With over a million women served, SHEROES is putting women's careers on the nation-building map.

## Cryobanks International India



With the intention of becoming India's largest inventory holder of cord blood stem cells for family storage and public banking, RJ Corp joined hands with the leader in stem cells banking - Cryobanks International USA, to form Cryobanks International India in 2006. Under the leadership of Mrs. Dhara Jaipuria and guidance of Dr. Naresh Trehan, India's best-known cardiac surgeon, Cryobanks India has set up the country's first modern, state-of-the-art cord blood stem cell bank at Gurgaon spread over 28,000 sq ft. Cryobanks India's team of medical professionals are extensively trained, certified & educated in cord blood processing and Quality Assurance processes at

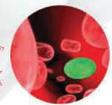


Cryobanks India employs the "Closed Bag" collection method for harvesting and blood stem cells, which greatly reduces the possibility of cord blood contamination.



### AquaStem Life International

The first organism to produce oxygen and perform the miracle of photosynthesis was the blue-green algae. Upper Klamath Lake in Oregon (USA) is the only known place in the world where the amazing microalgae *Aphanizomenon flos-aquae* flourish in large enough quantities for harvesting. In 1978, the founders of SimpleXXity Health began to develop a method for transforming this unique organism into the world's most nutrient-rich food. RJ Corp has joined hands with SimpleXXity to form AquaStem Life International with the motto "Let Food Be Our Medicine". Its mission is to reach this superior StemFlex across India by setting up over 100 outlets. The health supplement StemFlex will initially be imported and subsequently manufactured here as well.



Cryobanks International Inc, U.S.A. Cryobanks India has stored more than 17,000 samples of stem cells till date. Cryobanks India is also collaborating nationally and internationally to provide and develop world-class stem cell banking services in India, with a special focus on research of stem cell therapies for potential treatment of cardiac diseases and diabetes. Cryobanks India plans to establish seven cord blood banks across the country covering maximum ethnicities. It aims to become the major source of all types of stem cells for research institutions and a highly specialized training centre in the field of cord blood banking.



The blood that remains in the placenta and in the attached umbilical cord after childbirth is known as Umbilical Cord Blood. It contains stem cells that can be used to treat hematopoietic and genetic disorders.



## Chalo Dilli Chalein

One day in early June 2016, some of us got a call from an excited Rashmi Misra after she returned from a meeting in Delhi. Animated, she told us about the Annual Dinner on Sept. 10 in Delhi. The activities had already been discussed and planned in the meeting, and the ELSAs in Delhi were already gung-ho and buzzing about the preparations.

Of course, Rashmi who has great pride in her Bangalore tribe of feisty women, took over the ground work for the Souvenir in Bangalore. She was confident that it would come out as good as the one we had published in March 2014.

We all met on the lawns of Bangalore Club the same evening. Sanjari, Annabelle, Vandana, Rashmi and I talked over food and drinks to try and understand what all was going inside Rashmi's head.

She told us that we had to create a small presentation to depict the sisterhood amongst the ELSAs in Bangalore. We brainstormed about how we could do this with photographs across the various events over the 5 years, showcasing the various activities we had carried out.

It would whip up the enthusiasm for the other Chapters by connecting with their batchmates and hostel mates from yonder years.

Wondering how we could produce this film with finesse and with quality, we thought of Sahana Das. Sahana is a 1984 English Hons ELSA from 1981-84 batch who I had met only 2 days ago. A fantastic woman, she heads the Communication Studies Department at Mount Carmel College in Bangalore and, is a force to reckon with. Her students just adore her and the management

(read the Nuns) have great respect for her abilities. We immediately called up Sahana who was so excited about the project that she started throwing up various ideas. The concept of the movie "Chalo Dilli Chalein" was born.

Then came the task of getting our ELSAs to meet on a Sunday morning. We cajoled them with a call for a healthy start to the day with an early morning walk and cycling in the verdant Cubbon Park with a hearty breakfast to follow. We did this on 2 Sundays!

Sahana and her students agreed to take this on as a project. Her girls armed with their cameras, braved the traffic and weather, diligently visited every location instructed by their enthusiastic professor.

They met some of our stalwart alums in their homes, offices, at a book reading event and photographed them at unearthly morning hours to get the best lighting!

This photo shoot, the most recent get-together showed the camaraderie of ELSAs in Bangalore, across various batches, from the 60s to the youngest from 2010-13.

It was a fun project.

Cheers!

**Madhulika Dant nee Gupta**  
*B.Com (Hons) 1981-84*



# travELSA

PAST FORWARD >>>



Traveling together is a wonderful way to discover the world, ourselves, and each other.

TRAVELSA kicked off earlier this year with the Far East Cruise and Ladakh. An exciting travel calendar – with diverse trips, short and long, in India and overseas, luxury cruises and adventure trips are being scheduled.

Chapter members are invited to take the initiative to organise local experiences under the TRAVELSA umbrella.

Do send your ideas, and your wish list, and if you have a travel or related service you would like to offer.

Please mail: [travelsa@lsralumna.org](mailto:travelsa@lsralumna.org) or visit [www.lsralumna.org/travelsa](http://www.lsralumna.org/travelsa). Join us and add your ELSA friends on FB - TRAVELSA - LSR alumnae travel hub.

For Elsas by Elsas. TRAVELSA

**Every trip is a unique and bespoke experience.**

The ELSA Alumni Travel Hub – TRAVELSA – puts together many opportunities for us to come together – old friends and new – to explore different destinations, share memories and create new ones, and leave an ELSA footprint wherever we go!

### **The Next TRAVELSA Trip**

Early December we take you to COORG. With sweeping vistas of the picturesque Kodagu hills, and a stay in Raj-era mansions fit for royalty with coffee plantations all around. We promise you the perfect brew!





## The 3rd Annual Dinner, The ELSA Effect – 60 years

On 10th September 2016, ELSAs from across the world came together to rekindle old associations, and begin new friendships at the momentous 3rd Annual Dinner – 60 years of ELSA Effect at The Silver Oak, Habitat Centre, New Delhi.

The Annual Dinner over the last few years has become the Association's grandest event. And, is getting bigger every year. This year, it was graced by the presence of Dr. Suman Sharma, Principal of LSR, and Chief Advisor, ELSA, and our beloved former principal, Meenakshi Gopinath, also Mentor, ELSA.

After Rashmi Misra, President of the ELSA spoke a few words about the way forward for ELSA, the evening began with a moving rendition of the LSR Anthem by Sujatha V. Kumar from Coke Studio along with a choir of singers. The theme for the night was vibgyor, the colours of the rainbow, and ELSAs 'Through the Decades' came dressed wearing the colour palettes to reflect their decade. The 60 years of ELSA Effect was beautifully represented in the vibrant decorations – from the backdrop, to the tables, and in the collection of eye-catching memorabilia.

Our glamorous alumni, Shivani Wazir Pasrich compered the Annual Dinner and introduced the interactive panel discussion on the ELSA Effect – 60 years which was moderated by former principal, Meenakshi Gopinath, and mentor, ELSA. The eminent alumna Ritu Beri, Vinita Bali, Anjali Gopalan, Amita Sharma, Anju Timblo, Nonita Lall, Kishwar Desai and Leena Yadav formed the panelists. They engaged all the present ELSAs to participate in the ONE

ELSA Movement – to become involved, to build an active network across the globe through social, political and environmental initiatives.

The panel discussion was followed by Anju Timblo's sweet-sounding performance which regaled the crowd and had ELSAs swooning to her melodies. There is no better way to bond, than to sing a song.

The Fashion Walk was curated by 'the first lady' of Indian fashion, and an alumni, Ritu Beri and choreographed by another alumni, Shivani Wazir Pasrich. Lovely ELSAs in their 20s, 30s, 40s, 50s, 60s, strutted in their heels in the spotlight, showcasing Beri's eclectic mix of traditional and contemporary accessories, and dazzling the rest of us. As true ELSAs, they walked the walk.

The wonderful film – Chalon Dilli Chalein about the sisterhood of the Bangalore Chapter received enthusiastic cheers from the other Chapters.

The Tree of Life where everyone congregated to ink their names looked like street art – the branches of the tree and its leaves spreading in different directions, but the roots remaining as one.

The day had begun with the Annual General Meeting, and continued with meaningful conversations about 'Giving Back' – back to Alma Mater, and to the world at large. Prose melded into poetry with dance, dinner and music, with memories of yesteryears mingling with new memories being made.





3rd Annual Dinner, 2016  
Silver Oaks, Habitat Centre, New Delhi



**ELSA**  
Lady Shri Ram College Alumni Association

**60** years  
of ELSA Effect

**SHEROES**<sup>in</sup>  
TAKE CHARGE



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**SUJATA CHAUDHRI IP ATTORNEYS**



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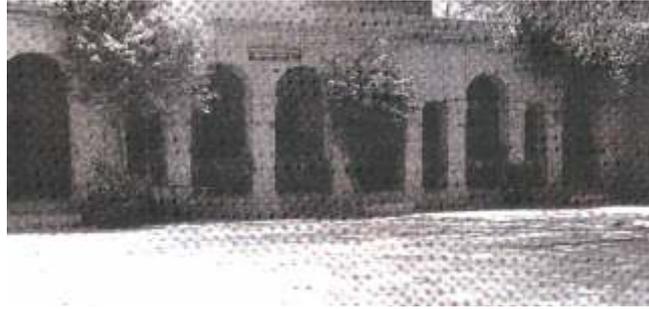


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## Daw Aung San Suu Kyi

*Nobel Laureate*

*Political Science (Hons), Batch of 1964*

These are excerpts taken from Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's speech at Lady Shri Ram College in 2012

“Before I came back to India, I always knew that when I came back, I would have to come to LSR, to this hall, where I learnt to speak. I had learned to sing the song that was one of Gandhi's favourite 'Raghupati Raghav Raja Ram.' We used to sing this at assemblies and when I heard this song in the film Gandhi, I felt that my ties to India were lasting and strong, that I was part of India and its traditions. I could understand what meant so much to Indians all over the world...I feel myself partly a citizen of India, a citizen of love and honour.”

“There is nothing that ages more than hatred, and there's nothing that ages more than making yourself a complete hostage to the past and its bitter experiences... it's not the experiences themselves, but how you interpret them, that decide what they are going to be. And I would like the young girls here and elsewhere, young girls and young men, young people everywhere, to interpret their experiences in a way that will make it positive for the world at large. Our world faces many challenges, but yet, all these challenges can be met because there is something that links all of us together.”

“Politics is not an easy profession, I do not like to call it

a profession...I've been wondering what to call it. Do you call politics a job? A vocation? A calling? A profession? I do not want to make it too idealistic, because politics is tough and there are choices you have to make in politics that cannot always be made through sheer idealism. But principles must always exist in politics. There are some who think this is naive.”

“Principles are not always in keeping with the needs of the present, of the needs of the time, but if you compromise on your principles then I think you had better stop engaging in politics, because unprincipled politics is about the most dangerous thing in the world and I hope all the young people who are thinking of going into politics will remember that. If you cannot keep to principled politics, get out of politics while you are still unblemished. Principled politics is not easy; it opens you up to many dangers, much criticism, much attack because principles can be interpreted by some people as 'intransigent.' I always say there is a great difference between inflexibility and just simple refusal to bend to the needs of principles and of politics. Bending to the needs of the principles, that is to say, not compromising your principles but changing your life and changing your decisions, in order that your principles may not be compromised, that is flexibility, but the kind of inflexibility that is dangerous is when

pride and vanity decide whether or not to compromise. Compromise should be made out of a sense of humility, out of a sense of knowledge, the acceptance that you are not perfect and your decisions may not always be right. But compromise does not mean you have to give up on your principles.”

“I would like to remind you that democratic rights are very precious. It's only when you do not have them, you realise how precious they are. Many things that you take for granted here, we are still fighting for in Burma, we are still struggling for in Burma. When I come to a place like this, a place of high education, a place where young girls can enjoy campus life to the fullest, I am reminded of the fact that many of the young people of Burma do not even know what campus life means.”





## Vinita Bali

*Business Leader*

*Economics (Hons), Batch of 1975*

*"I've never let my school interfere with my education."*

**Mark Twain**

I came to LSR to have fun – defined as a combination of participating in lots of activities, college elections, etc., bunking classes (a supreme thrill at first), doing well academically (the license to do all else), and engaging with anything that seemed interesting. Little did I realise that doing many things simultaneously, was the way I was going to live my life.

At LSR, several one-off events took us on interesting detours – like a spoof on Hindi films, scripted over *Chai/Samosa* in the canteen, got us every award, and, an invitation to stage it at the military hospital for our *Jawans*, following the 1971 war. We woke up one morning to a burnt auditorium, where the previous evening we had staged "The Trojan Women" and set about raising funds to re-build it. Uma Sharma, our alumna, readily agreed to a concert and we walked into every corporate in Delhi asking for money — and got it!

Effectively, LSR became the launch pad for a never-ending quest to expand and explore horizons and be oblivious to boundaries. My professional journey so far has taken me to over 70 countries (I keep a count) and the opportunity to live and work in 5 continents –

opening my eyes to art, history and culture, as much as, global business and economics. It gave me the opportunity to watch one of the greatest transition in our times, namely the 1<sup>st</sup> election in South Africa in 1994 when I was based in South Africa and working for Cadbury Schweppes. What I learnt about tenacity, grace, humility and sense of purpose, just watching Mr. Mandela and several others in action or the sense of hope and optimism I experienced in the people of South Africa, is beyond description.

LSR is a privilege and responsibility, for it gives us the confidence to confront challenges with intelligence and empathy.

*"Main akela hi chala tha, jaanib-e-manzil magar, log saath aate gaye aur karvaan banta gaya"*



## Anjali Gopalan

*Activist*

*Political Science (Hons),*

*Batch of 1977*

*Time Magazine Featured Anjali Gopalan Among The World's 100 Most Influential People.*

Human and animal rights activist Anjali Gopalan is the founder of The Naz Foundation, an NGO focusing on the fight against AIDS in India. Her work encompasses issues related to women and children, and marginalised communities. She supports the sexual and health rights of LGBTs.

### **Share a defining moment in LSR.**

It was so long ago — is it possible not to remember? Kidding aside, in my first job interview I was told, “we expect you to be good. You are from LSR!”

**Arnab Goswami wants the nation to know. Which well-kept secret about LSR would you share?**

Please tell Arnab and the nation, those walls could be scaled in spite of Narpath Singh and Dr. Luthra!

**In a polluted and overpopulated world, human-animal conflict is a tragic consequence. How would you ease this?**

By getting rid of human beings! Seriously, by working to create an environment that ensures a humane

response. It has to be legal and social.

**Which 'LSR girl' stereotype irritated or amused you?**

“Girls from LSR are fast.” Good heavens!

**What advice would you offer an Indian parent, whose child has admitted to being gay?**

You can't stop loving your child. This is the same child you have raised with love and care. Being gay does not make your child any less worthy of your love and faith.

Interviewed by **Monideepa Sahu**

*English (Hons)*

*Batch of 1976*



## Kishwar Desai

*Author*

*Economics (Hons), Batch of 1977*

### *Generate Respect For Our Heritage*

#### **What does the Elsa Effect mean to you?**

It means having the courage to face a challenge! Being an ELSA means one is continuously looking for challenges. And so, after a two-decade-long career in TV, writing four books and in the middle of a fifth one, and raising funds to set up the Gandhi statue opposite the UK Parliament, I decided to fulfil a long time dream, and create the world's first Partition Museum.

One of the greatest difficulties in India is to generate respect for our heritage. The Partition of India, seventy years ago, led to the largest migration in history — with over fourteen million losing their homes, their loved ones, their lives. There is, surprisingly, no memorial or space to commemorate their anguish anywhere in the world. Thus, with a group of volunteers, we set up a non-profit Trust. The Punjab Government has allotted some space within an old colonial building in Amritsar for the Partition Museum. It is strategically placed with Jallianwala Bagh and the Golden Temple at a walking distance, and just half an hour from the border at Wagah.

Totally funded by monetary support from various people, as well as contributions of artefacts, documents etc. from 1947, this is a people's museum. We are also collecting information from various archives, libraries and universities from all over the world. Our mandate is to create not just a museum, but also the largest archive on the partition where

visitors can understand what that generation went through.

My entire family is helping me give shape to this dream. My children see this as a means of preserving history while my parents are 'Partition Survivors.' I appeal to all ELSAs to join in!

#### **An interesting anecdote from college**

When I was ragged by seniors into participating in the 'Miss LSR' competition. In those days, given our political leanings, I thought this was an indulgence of the bourgeoisie. But the seniors plucked my bushy eyebrows, put me in a saree and I walked the ramp. Funnily enough, I enjoyed myself and won! I could only mentally think of how astonished the seniors would have been.

#### **Favourite hangout in LSR**

At 'Nippy and Guttus' canteen. We loved those omelettes and the gossip. I loved sitting there and working on that crazy LSR newspaper that I used to write for — The Jabberwocky.

#### **Message for ELSAs**

Please do try to preserve your family archives. And contribute towards preserving the country's heritage.

Interviewed by **Vandana Sarin**

*History (Hons)*

*Batch of 1977*



## Naina Lal Kidwai

*Banker*

*Economics (Hons), Batch of 1977*

*Choosing Your Husband Is An Important Career Choice*

**How would you describe your years at LSR in two words?**

Empowering and fulfilling

**LSR moments**

Being hoisted onto the Canteen tables to give speeches in both English and Hindi, to rally support for Student Union elections. Organising *Tarang*. The college auditorium had burned down 4 or 5 years before that, so we had to go about fixing it, raising prize money, organising speakers and negotiating with the Principal to allow boys on campus.

I recall a funny incident where we had St. Stephens participating in the Inter-College dramatics event. They asked us to provide a table tennis table on the stage, which we carried on with some difficulty. They then proceeded to play table tennis, as a packed auditorium watched 2 guys, one over 6 feet and another under 4.5 feet hit the ball into the audience every few seconds and call 'ball'. All this while a third guy played referee reciting algorithm tables! It took us and the audience a good 15 minutes to come to our senses and boo them off the stage and chase them off campus.

**Favourite haunts on campus**

Loved hanging out at the Canteen and on the back lawns, especially during winter eating peanuts.

**Enduring friendship from College**

So many that it would be difficult to enumerate. From teachers like Meenakshi Gopinath to past Presidents Vinita Bali, Sujata Mehta with whom I worked closely in the Students Union to several batchmates.

**'Delhi Special' during LSR days**

Indian Classical Music concerts like the Pandit Shankar Lal Festival on balmy nights on the lawns.

**If not a banker, what would you have been?**

Difficult to say, maybe insurance. Definitely, Finance!

**Defining achievement**

Early leadership platforms — becoming the secretary and then the President of the Students Union. Those early experiences were important because they came at a time when I was very unsure about myself.

**Advice for women facing difficult choices**

Choosing your husband is an important career choice. You will be ridden with perennial guilt — just remind yourself that we all feel that way but somehow men don't. Don't give up, stay true to yourself, ask for help and try your best to balance it all out.

**Any advice to your younger self?**

To stop worrying about the future and enjoy myself a little more.

**Favourite quote**

A Sanskrit saying '*Maha Sthavira Sangharakshita*' — To know what you do not know is perennial learning. A mindset of continuous learning is needed in this fast changing world.

**Parting message for all ELSAs**

You are the country's best minds, use it to move ahead and excel in your chosen fields.

Interviewed by **Varsha Pai**

*B. Com (Hons)*

*Batch of 2006*



## Rekha Menon

*Chairman & MD Accenture*

*Economics (Hons), Batch of 1979*

*Well Camouflaged Soft-centre And The Biggest Heart*

**What is one characteristic that defines you as a leader?**

Action-oriented! I tend to lead from the front.

**How much has the corporate world changed from your starting out days when organisations did not have 'Programmes for Women'?**

Corporate India has seen a sea change since my time. There was little support for women then. But now, hiring, retaining and growing women's careers has become a business imperative for most organisations, backed by supporting policies from the government. But we still have a long way to go!

**You are Chairman and Managing Director of Accenture in India, sit on the Board of Pratham Books and Akshara Foundation, and a keen long distance cyclist. How do you balance your personal and professional roles?**

By prioritising, by asking for help, by letting go of something, and by being in the present and focussing on what's at hand. To me, taking care of the mind, body and soul, and giving back to society are very important. It is what gives me energy.

**How did LSR prepare you for life's challenges?**

LSR helped me develop a lot as a person. Empowering women to be future leaders is a deep-set agenda of the college — not a lot of colleges did that, back in those days. I am glad that I was part of an institution which thinks forward and prepares its women to create their own path to success. My LSR experience has stayed with me over the years, even today, as a professional.

**What was the most likely place where Rekha could be found in college?**

In the cafeteria, on the lawns, and in the library!

**What motivates you to get out of bed in the morning?**

I love what I do, I enjoy my life. Besides, I am an early riser— so no problems getting out of bed.

**If I was to ask the person closest to you, one quality they totally love about you, and one, which drives them insane, what would it be?**

I just asked my husband that, and in his words — on what he loves, “the well camouflaged soft-centre and the biggest heart.” What drives him insane, “that you have to have the last word!” With friends and at work, I have been told that they like the fact that I am very transparent — “what you see is what you get!” On the flip side, I have been told that I can be very blunt and non-diplomatic.

**If you could personally witness anything, what would it be?**

The end of poverty and hunger! It really gets to my core that nearly 70 years after independence, many can't take a full stomach for granted.

**Do you have any pets at home? How do they add to your life?**

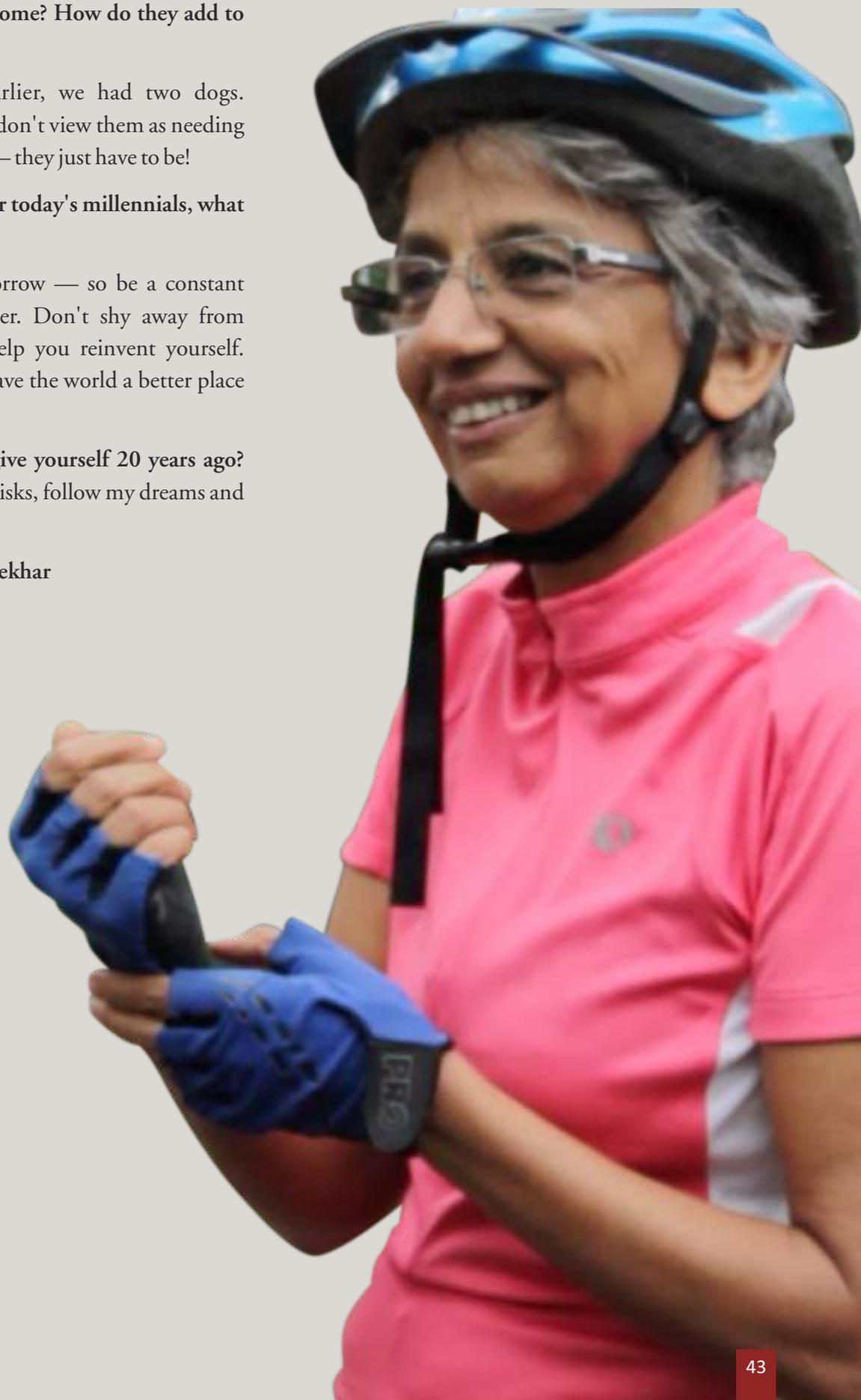
We always had pets. Earlier, we had two dogs. Currently, have two cats. I don't view them as needing to add anything to my life — they just have to be!

**If you have one message for today's millennials, what would it be?**

You will inherit our tomorrow — so be a constant learner, doer and risk-taker. Don't shy away from challenges — they will help you reinvent yourself. Take care of the planet. Leave the world a better place than you found it.

**What advice would you give yourself 20 years ago?**  
I would tell myself to take risks, follow my dreams and be prepared to fail.

Interviewed by **Archana Shekhar**  
*Economics (Hons), 1998*





## Uma Sharma

*Classical Dancer*

*BA, Batch of 1962*

*Dance Has Had A Great Influence In My Life*

**How did your formative years in LSR influence your dance?**

It was in LSR, that I blossomed from a budding artist into a full-fledged dancer. I was chosen as the president of the music and dance society, that gave me the opportunity to hone my creative talent. I was actively involved in choreographing dance pieces in college and also for the various university festivals.

**How has your passion for dance added to your life?**

Dance has had a great influence in my life. I have travelled widely to perform at prestigious festivals, at national and international levels. Recognition for my art form has been an incredible journey. I have been honoured with the highest National Awards like *Padma Shree*, *Padma Bhushan*, *Sangeet Natak Akademi Award*, to name a few. It has also earned me a doctorate from the Utkal University.

**How can we get more students to actively participate in the arts as students, supporters etc?**

Students should be exposed to various art forms and encouraged to pursue them, including dance and music. One can achieve that by getting them to participate at various functions as well as attending classical dance concerts, including lecture demonstrations. I have been training a whole new generation of young dancers including foreigners from West Asia, Europe and America.

Besides teaching the next generation, I organise various festivals to introduce the different facets of our culture. *Swami Haridas Tansen Sangeet Nritya Samaroh* is an annual event in Delhi, with eminent musicians and

dancers participating from different parts of the country.

As an artist, one has to constantly evolve to connect with the audience. My production '*Stree*' depicting the position of woman down the centuries and her search for an independent identity has been appreciated for its powerful thematic content.

Absorbing from world culture, I was the first to experiment with Spanish Flamenco and Kathak, in a unique duet, way back in 1973.

Poetry is an intrinsic part of the Kathak repertoire. I celebrate Ghalib's birthday every year at the Ghalib Museum, (founded by me) with Scholars, Poets and eminent citizens participating in the event. It is a popular project which attracts a lot of artists.

**Classical dance as a career option is a rare choice? Your advice.**

To choose classical dance as a career option, one has to be highly motivated and willing to dedicate their life completely to dance. The next challenge is to find the right *Guru*. You can't treat dance as a hobby if you intend to make it a career.

**If you were made the Principal of LSR, what are the three priorities you would have?**

- \* Expose girls to music and dance.
- \* Hold cultural festivals and Lecture Demos by eminent artists.
- \* Encourage girls to participate in creative performing arts.

Interviewed by Sanjari  
*English (Hons), Batch of 1987*



## Anju Timblo

*Hotelier*

*Economics (Hons), Batch of 1970*

*Resorts Provide Memories And Comforts*

### What made you choose LSR?

LSR was the only good option for Economics and St. Stephens was closed for girls.

### How did being in LSR contribute to shaping your personality?

It was a different experience after being in a co-ed school. The freedom and options to participate in activities and interaction with girls from different fields had a good and varied influence.

### Ragging trends of the Seventies

Very innocent ragging by seniors on my first day which included having my face painted, sitting in a 'nallah' and then a photograph on the front page of the newspaper next day — difficult to forget!

### Music was an integral part of your life? Any favourites?

My favorite singers then were — Joan Baez, Cher, Simon and Garfunkel. If I was to choose from the bands, predictable choice would be The Beatles, Doors and Creedence Clearwater Revival. Even today, they feature on my preferred list.

### Your favourite 'hang-out' in college?

Mr. Ahuja's canteen and sometimes the hostel.

### Any interests you pursued in college which plays an important part in your life, even today?

My main interest was music and we had a band 'The Mixed Ups' and an all girls' band 'Tomorrow's Grand Mothers' for performances at LSR; and community

work with members from different colleges. Both these interests have stayed with me till today, in different ways.

### If you had the option of going back to college and selecting a different course. Your choice

Choose another course? I guess, I would opt for Political Science as I enjoy the scope of the subject.

### Was there any individual in LSR who left a lasting impression on you?

While in college, my interest in Economics developed due to teachers like Mrs. Sarla Katariya (Head of Economics Dept). who made the subject so interesting for us. Also, Dr. Luthra, our Principal, played a very important role as she encouraged us to continue with our music and we were featured in all the college events.

### How do you perceive the role of hospitality industry in our society?

Resorts provide memories and comfort. Social responsibility is an integral part of the business as it deals with people and develops a sense of responsibility, service and care — the core of social responsibility.

### A thought you would like to share with the young ELSAs

You are in a great environment and institution. Learn and absorb what the college offers and you can be ready for what you want to be.

By Pratibha Singh

*Economics (Hons)*

*Batch of 2004*



## Ritu Beri

*Fashion Designer*  
*BA, Batch of 1987*

### *Nothing Inspires Me More Than Life*

#### **How do you think LSR contributed to your personal growth and professional success?**

I realised what I didn't want to do in life while in college. Those were my growing years and I learnt a lot.

#### **How much of a trendsetter were you back then?**

I didn't know what trend meant at that time. I learnt to knit in my spare time and that got me admission into NIFT.

#### **Your success mantra!**

I was the first Asian to head a French fashion house. Back then, no Indian designer had done a show in Paris and for an Indian designer to be heading a French fashion house was a dream come true. Not having a map to follow brings with it great struggles and challenges. My parents have always stood by me and supported me. I never stopped dreaming, why would anyone?

#### **This August, Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC) launched a 'national fabric' collection: the exclusive Ritu Beri's Khadi Collection. Why Khadi? Why now?**

My first collection, 25 years ago, when I started on my fashion designing journey, was Khadi. The fabric is not only hand spun but also known as 'the air conditioner fabric.' We need to do this for our country — it gives employment to so many people.

#### **What next?**

The coming days are going to be consumed by my latest initiative — to design uniforms for thirteen lakh employees of the Indian Railways. I have submitted four sets to the ministry in July, each with a distinct texture. Right from TTs to guards, drivers to front office staff, and even catering personnel — each is the face of the railways for the passengers. I want the uniform to be an ode to India and her exoticism. Comfort has to be the most important factor while the cut is Indo-western. I wish to reflect the glory of our country along with focus on the current modern India. Hence, it includes both saris and t-shirts and the first phase is focusing on five lakh employees.

#### **What is RBFF?**

After LSR and NIFT, when I was still struggling to achieve recognition and wished someone would guide me and give a helping hand, I had many moments of disillusionment and anguish but managed to find my way. Ritu Beri Fashion Fraternity is my way of helping upcoming designers, now that I am in a position to assist. People from inside and outside the fashion industry are my allies in this endeavour. It is a stepping stone for talented designers who are desirous of launching their own brands.

#### **Now, the Luxury League?**

The Luxury League is a relatively unique concept — a global non-profit foundation. Since the idea is to

perpetuate our Indian artisans' traditional skills at the global level through luxury brands, there is a lot of collaboration and creative thinking involved at a worldwide level. Indian luxury is associated with fantasy and we subtly want to sustain that through exchange of ideas, dialogue and mutual assistance. We can conquer new markets by developing a winning attitude.

**Tell us more about the Blessed Hearts Foundation?**

I have always wanted to help the less fortunate. I was happy to collaborate with the Richard Gere Foundation for AIDS through my ensemble at a charity auction to raise funds, as also volunteering to raise funds for the Indian Cross. I set up the Blessed Hearts Foundation as an effort to give the under-privileged children of India a brighter future.

**If you switch jobs what would you rather be?**

When I was young, I always wanted to be a doctor — complete with stethoscope and black bag. I must honestly admit though, that my medical ambitions were somewhat thwarted by the fact that I spent more time mulling over the wardrobe of the medical team rather than the more noble aspects of the profession.

In my mind, I would give the doctor's overcoat an interesting pocket detail for his stethoscope, and I would be buzzing with ideas for dressing up the nurses, designing starched headgear and improving their apron, adding frills at the hem. It didn't take me long to figure out that this was my calling.

**Where do you find inspiration?**

Nothing inspires me more than Life. It has gifted me so many rewarding experiences and continues to be my source of passion.

Interviewed by **Rachna Dhir**

*Economics (Hons)*

*Batch of 1989*





## Pinky Anand

*Additional Solicitor General of India  
Economics (Hons), Batch of 1977*

*I Am Indebted To Lsr*

### **What is your lasting memory of LSR?**

My lasting memory of LSR is of running around in shorts with Dr. S.M. Luthra, Principal of LSR, chasing me to wear proper clothes. Not that I wore shorts for fashion. I used to play lawn tennis in the day and hockey in the morning. We used to tell Dr. Luthra that once we were provided with proper changing rooms, we would change. The rest, LSR was the best and still is. It provided every possible facility and environment for dignified growth as an individual and as part of society. I am indebted to LSR. My daughter Gauri is also an LSR alumni.

Academically, the education imparted by outstanding teachers has taken one very far. LSR also provided all possible facility for extracurricular activities. I participated in music, debating and sports. I was awarded the best all round student in LSR and topped my batch.

### **Which has been the most life changing case which you have handled so far?**

I can think of a few milestone judgments, but to name a couple: I handled the case for Arjun Munda challenging the unconstitutional action of the Governor of denying him Chief Ministership. In a few days, the Supreme Court, in a historic judgement overturned the action and after a floor test, Arjun Munda became the Chief Minister. Indeed a

constitutional landmark. Recently, the Supreme Court appointed me to prepare a report of 1500 suggestions from across the country recommending improvements in the collegium system of appointment of judges. It was a gruelling and demanding task but fascinating experience and forms the touchstone of judicial appointment reforms.

### **If you could take only three things to an island, what would they be?**

Swimming costumes, music and friends

### **How has your experience been while representing India in the BRICS legal forum?**

It was a fascinating experience to co-author, that too, on an international perspective. I might say that the publishers Sweet and Maxwell were extremely exacting. It was also a very enriching experience since we were doing cross-country comparisons. So far no authoritative text was there on the subject. The book now adorns a number of leading law libraries of the world.

Interviewed by Archana Shekhar  
*Economic (Hons)  
Batch of 1998*



## Anurupa Roy

*Puppeteer*

*History (Hons), Batch of 1998*

*Becoming A Puppeteer Changed My Life Completely*

**You'd already discovered puppetry before you joined college. How did LSR help advance your interest in the art?**

LSR was the turning point in my life. I realised that I could be what I am, and also what I should be. Becoming a puppeteer changed my life completely and turned it upside down, and I am eternally grateful to college for that.

**The first story you ever told?**

I invented a life for myself in the mirror and imagined a whole other existence at the age of five. Told people tall tales about this place I was from.

**Your favourite story**

My all-time favourite story is *Mahabharata*, with its endless stories all entwined, so metaphorically familiar and fantastically plausible.

**The most clichéd line**

"Ahhhh, I have an original idea!!"

**Staying motivated**

Is easy, if you love what you do.

**Under pressure**

Is when I perform the best!

**Inspired by**

Passionate work

**Somewhere over the rainbow**

There is another rainbow

**These are a few of my favourite things**

Dogs, puppets and food

**What is this we hear about you being a manipulative person?**

Very manipulative, but only with non-living objects

**Have you always liked pulling strings?**

I like pulling strings and the occasional leg too!

**Was that a useful skill to have in college?**

Oh yes, absolutely!

**Most exasperating moment**

There are too many exasperating moments, most involve some form of bureaucracy. Need I say more! Often, people exasperate me too. It is quite incredible to see the heights and depths that humans are capable of. I am often stunned at their cruelty as also by the extraordinary kindness.

**I use my art to reach out ....**

I don't use my art form, you can't use the arts. I live life through this art. I see the world through it. Living that life automatically brings varied people into my life. I like people. I feel the constant need to meet different kinds of people from different walks of life. Their stories inspire me.

**Our strength lies in .....**

Standing together! My biggest strength is the puppetry community I work with. It's a lonely path but to know that there are others out there who know the same trials, gives me a sense that everything is 'Okay'.

**Across the universe.....**

Seems too far away sometimes and sometimes, just within my grasp

Interviewed by Sanjari

*English (Hons), Batch of 1987*



## Leena Yadav

Filmmaker

*Economics (Hons), Batch of 1991*

*Working As A Team With Different Minds Is A Skill*

**How would you describe your years at LSR in three words?**

Exhilarating, Expanding, Self-discovery

**Your life at LSR in photo frames.**

Photo frames would be tough, even in words — It was a lot of fun exploring, losing my inhibitions, treading uncharted territories, understanding myself and what I enjoyed, doing things that I have never done before and also for the inevitable introduction to feminism.

**A memory you would never edit out of your LSR days.**

I had tons of fun during the ragging sessions at college, doing bizarre stuff like laying an egg on the lawn or hugging a tree or flushing your smile or just randomly being told to cover my head with *Lajja Vastra*.

**Favorite places on campus**

The Royal Corridor/basking in the front lawns/hanging out in the canteen for hours!

**Enduring friendship from college**

We were a group of 8 girls and we have had multiple reunions with husbands, kids and others. I have met so many ELSAs outside of college and that shows their impact.

**Anyone you have collaborated with for film making?**

I have used my friends as sounding boards during my editing sessions or screenplay writing sessions. I have connected with Reshma Preetam, in the media.

**Favourite Delhi experience from LSR days**

Learning to hitchhike, but we managed to go shopping to GK, amongst others!

**Did you have any inkling in college that you were veering towards filmmaking? That it wasn't just a hobby but something that could take over your life?**

I was always good at story telling but this play we put up with a Fulbright Scholar, while at LSR, called 'Steel Magnolias' — theatre adaption of the movie, was a high point of my life then. I knew the creative space was my calling.

I had a revelation towards the last term in LSR that I really was veering towards the arts and media. I loved extra-curricular, was part of a number of shows, was president of Hive, did a gazillion posters for odd things. So, I remember having a great moment of clarity that I would feel stifled in a 9 to 5 job.

I had enrolled myself for MBA classes, chucked it, packed my bags and moved to Bombay. Delhi was oppressive with its restriction on movement and safety issues.

My father jokes that I moved from a 9 to 5 one to a chaotic 24-hour one instead, but I have enjoyed all its moments.

### Favourite professional dialogue

'Good Morning!' It sounds funny but it is actually my version of greeting, symbolising new beginnings, whenever we meet even if its 2 am in the morning or at midnight.

***Parched* makes women and LSR proud with relevant issues of female subjugation brought to the fore. Story idea and influences?**

Started as a free-wheeling conversation with an actress who was telling me about her previous shoot at a village when she overheard a bunch of rural women speaking about sex in the most honest and unfiltered manner. The direct and easy approach was refreshing especially in a repressed society like ours.

**What aspect of your personality do you credit to LSR?**

Working as a team with different minds is a skill that has served me the best right now, as cinema is a hugely

collaborative art where functioning as a whole optimally is very important.

**Advice to younger ELSAs and also to someone who wants a life creating movies**

Feminism is individualistic, so what I got to observe at close quarters were women at LSR from lecturers to fellow students to seniors, breaking boundaries, growing into themselves and unapologetically becoming who they want to be. LSR is a great platform and an unparalleled opportunity to discover one's self. So, exploit every chance you have there and network with these creative minds once you pass out.

And people who want to make a movie, just go for it, you will learn things along the way. Make your own story!

Interviewed by Varsha Pai

*B.Com (Hons)*

*Batch of 2006*





## Anjana Sinha

IPS

History (Hons), Batch of 1984

*Tiny Dynamo*

**First few days in LSR — any distinct memories?**

I was ragged by a gang of seniors who made me dance to the tune of 'Rang Barse' and made me eat chillies, in the café. I was tagged as 'Fresher Sunsilk' because of my hair. And I do remember being the cheeky fresher who always answered back!

**Tell us about the fun times in college**

We had a fun gang in the hostel – we used to sing around the bonfire during *Lohri*. I remember performing a welcome piece, choreographed in the Odissi style during *Tarang*, when Mrs Gandhi visited our college. I made some wonderful friends in LSR and am still in touch with them. Have such fond memories of the boisterous but warm and gregarious seniors.

**Was being an IPS officer your first career choice?**

No, I wanted to graduate in history and end up teaching or doing research at JNU. While doing my MPhil, my parents pressurised me to write the Civil Services exam, which I wrote, just before my engagement. Destiny determines certain things. So today, I am Additional Director General of Police (Technical Services), head of the e-governance part of policing, in AP.

**If you were the Principal of LSR today.....**

LSR should be a platform for a think tank, for ideating. It should not have the 'elite college' tag. It must empower women — LSR can build on its brand equity.

**Reaction of people when you say you are from LSR.....**

They think you are extra cool, hip-hop and *bindaas*. There were girls who had affairs with cricketers, but not all were like that. It's a misconception.

**What has it meant being a senior woman IPS officer?**

My biggest challenge was from my seniors who tried to reign me in. People find me intimidating but I look most non-descript! I look small but that is completely different from my persona — I have made huge strides in IT intervention and technology in the police force.

**Looking at the future**

My aim is to make police stations more friendly and transparent and less intimidating.

Interviewed by Ganga Krishnakumar

English (Hons)

Batch of 1991



## Nonita Lall Qureshi

*Professional Golfer*

*Psychology (Hons), Batch of 1980*

*Life Should Be About Celebrating Individual Successes – No Matter Which Discipline*

**How did an LSR education prepare you for facing challenges in your chosen field of profession i.e. professional golf?**

Quite honestly, LSR was not very supportive of athletes back then. I used to play basketball for Delhi University and Delhi State while in college, and despite it being a recognised university sport, we got very little help from the college. Maybe that's what toughened me up, inadvertently. I loved to play and was not prepared to let these challenges stop me from doing what I wanted. Continuing to play a team sport was getting to be very tough and I took to golf after I finished with college.

**Tell us a couple of sweet-sour memories from your college days?**

We had some wonderful staff in the Psychology Department, who went the extra mile to help when I had missed too many classes. I remember cycling to college from Panchsheel Park where we used to stay; hardly anyone had a car. I see that has changed dramatically now. Winter mornings on the front lawns eating peanuts and drinking tea is an enduring memory. In contrast, frustration at not having a basketball coach for long periods and having to train on one's own, is equally unforgettable.

**Something you did NOT like about the years you spent in LSR.**

The loos were disgusting. I hope they have improved now. The food at the canteen was quite delicious but terribly oily and unhealthy. Not good for an athlete.

**Is there any stereotype of the 'LSR girl' that amuses or annoys you?**

I have really lost touch with college over the years, so it's hard to say. I have been too immersed in my golfing career. Sincerely, I hope LSR doesn't produce stereotypes! Life should be about celebrating individual successes no matter what discipline they come from.

**Sports has become a celebrity-ridden field, as glamorous and lucrative as entertainment. Still, not many women athletes have made it big.**

India is still in the dark ages, the way it treats and trains its athletes. We have a long way to go. Facilities and conditions are appalling though things are changing slowly. Other than cricket, I don't think you can draw any parallels with the entertainment industry and sport. It's a sad and shocking state of affairs. Those who have made it have really done it on their own, with the support of family and well-wishers. That's what makes it even harder for women in sport. How many of you would have recognised the faces of our women athletes, other than Sania Mirza and Saina Nehwal who are frequently in the news.

**The Rio Olympics have shown our women athletes are capable of winning medals on the international stage. What role do coaches play in their success?**

It is impossible to clap with one hand, coaches play an important role in getting players ready for major events. Apart from training them on the technical requirements of their sport, they also play a huge role in mentoring and guiding them. Though one has to give credit to the athletes for the efforts they put in, showing the horse where to drink the water from, is what the coach must do!

**Any advice from our very own Arjuna Awardee?**

If we don't stand up as a nation and get behind our youngsters in sport, we will never really emerge as a nation with a strong sporting legacy. However, I do believe if you have the passion, the willpower and the ability to stand up and fight against all odds, then you must follow your dreams. Our girls have proved their mettle at the Rio Olympics. The journey is extremely tough but the rewards are very satisfying. There really isn't much money to be made; it's more about honour and glory.

Interviewed by **Mumukshu Mohanty**  
*Political Science (Hons),  
Batch of 1996*



## Amita Sharma

*Educationist*

*English (Hons), Batch of 1973*

### *Learn To Learn*

#### **Why was LSR your first choice?**

LSR's reputation as a modern educational institute that boasted of academic excellence was the yardstick. I had always wanted to study English Literature.

#### **Any funny incident in college you'd like to share with us?**

LSR, for me, was total immersion in a world of books — that was fun, without being 'funny'. It was a deep experience, beyond incidents.

#### **How did being in LSR influence you as a person?**

LSR taught me to be my own person. Vindicated my intuitive belief that to do what you love, regardless of success, brings the most cherished achievements in life.

#### **What was your favourite 'den' in college?**

The library

#### **What has been the highlight of your professional journey so far?**

Since I was in a public service role, I had the opportunity of innovating educational and livelihood projects for poor communities and leveraging technologies for delivering services to them.

#### **Any interest you pursued while in college, and still do today?**

Reading and writing.

#### **If you had the option of going back to college and selecting a different course, what would it be?**

I wish one could take up a mix of economics, literature, history and philosophy — you need them all to be properly trained with concepts and skills for understanding anything at all.

#### **Was there any individual in LSR that left a lasting impression on you?**

My encouraging teachers — MV (Malti Varma), Mrs. M Couto, Ms. Manju Jain, Mrs. M Mukherjee.

#### **What are the women-specific challenges you see in the field of education today, and what can we do about them?**

Social biases and stereotypes persist. Women have to multi-task. I think organisational flexibility as well as women in leadership positions can really help. Media can play a very important role in re-inventing a liberal culture. Technology is effective in expanding opportunities.

#### **What would you tell the young women of LSR today?**

There are a lot of 'models' out there. Don't yearn to be any of them. Stay focused on what you have to learn and learn to learn. That will show you the way and you will succeed in doing what you are meant to be doing.

Interviewed by **Pratibha Singh**

*Economics (Hons)*

*Batch of 2004*



## Annette Philip

*Musician*

*Journalism (Hons), Batch of 2003*

*Be Aware Of Who You Are*

**How would you describe the influence of LSR in your life?**

LSR was life changing for me. I found my identity and discovered that I could be who I wanted to be, in that environment. I found faculty, staff, students as well as seniors, were proud of who they were, unafraid to voice their opinions. They were open-minded women and helped me grow and accept myself the way I was. I found there was space at LSR — to be who you were and there was acceptance that led to more self acceptance.

**Fondest memories of LSR**

I remember spending hours and hours, sometimes full days, in the green room of the auditorium. The Indian Music Society and the Western Music Society members would rehearse for hours experimenting and exploring. We brought all sorts of ideas to the table and



believed that anything was possible. I liked the freedom we were given by the college. Meenakshi Gopinath was such a big supporter of the groups and of arts, in general. I'm so grateful that I was part of such an amazing college that allowed us to be free.

**How do you look at giving back to the society?**

I learned at LSR that part of our social responsibility is to firstly, really be aware of who you are, and be the person you were meant to be. Fully! With every essence of your being! Follow your heart, stand up for what you believe, and take risks to make your dreams a reality. From a space of liberation and fulfilment, there's so much you can do in the world around you.

In my life in Boston, teaching at Berklee College of Music, I felt the best way I could give back, was to continue creating a platform, creating opportunities for musicians to interact, collaborate and create. By nurturing performers, composers, arrangers, producers, we are paving the way for the next generation of musicians, tomorrow's leaders who will hopefully be open-minded, loving, compassionate and generous in their art, their vision and their life.

**Message for young ELSAs**

What a blessing to have been a part of the LSR family. Hope you continue to challenge yourself, raise the bar—no matter what your creative and entrepreneurial pursuits are, and always, always, remember who you are.

Interviewed by **Shonali Advani**

*History (Hons),  
Batch of 2003*



## Gauri Khan

*Designer*

*History (Honours), Batch of 1991*

### *Shahrukh Made College Life Very Easy For Me*

*Her name is associated with one of the biggest stars of India. But Gauri Khan is and has always been very much her own woman with her individual ambitions and worldview. She wears many hats now: designer, entrepreneur, fashion diva. She has succeeded in conquering every mountain that has come in her path with style and grace.*

### **Describe your life in LSR?**

I was lucky to join LSR along with my friends from school. It was more like a continuation of that same warmth, friendship and learning. My time in LSR was spent with my friends Supriya, Shivani and Rachna from the Economics section, and with Manjuri and Juhi from my own History department.

### **What memories do you have of your days at LSR? Any incident that you remember with fondness?**

It was one of the best times of my life. Shahrukh made college life very easy for me. Even though he himself studied Economics in college, he actually went through my entire course and made History notes for me, so I was really able to enjoy and experiment with creative endeavours that interested me. My friend Shivani and I even enrolled for an additional textile design course while in LSR.

### **How did college shape you?**

The most important thing in life is friends and I managed to cement some lifelong friendships while I was in college.

### **Any message for ELSAs? How are you giving back to society and how can you relate that to what you learnt or imbibed at LSR?**

I have been through the journey of being a supportive partner, a mother and to complete the circle I now work in a number of my own creative ventures. People think feminism and empowerment is about asserting yourself. For me, it is equally about the freedom of doing what you want to do without the fear of judgment and doubt.

I have contributed to society by being honest in my craft as a graphic designer and now an interior decorator. I feel fortunate to have the chance to give other creative people a platform to show their talent as well. My store in Mumbai, Gauri Khan Designs is a destination where people say their style evolves. I am working on several inspiring projects with well known architects which is a constant learning process and I am also enjoying endorsing some products that I believe in.

I like to share my style secrets with other people like me, who enjoy the good things in life.

Interviewed by Archana Patni  
*Sociology (Hons),  
Batch of 2002*



## Lillete Dubey

*Actor/Director*

*English (Hons), Batch of 1974*

*The Road Less Travelled*

**Becoming a film star years after becoming a mom, usually works the other way round. Share your story please.**

I call myself an accidental film actress. After my masters in Eng Literature (from LSR) and my masters in Mass Communication (from IMC), I got married and delivered my first 2 most important productions, my daughters Neha and Ira. I then immersed myself in theatre (which I had been pursuing passionately all through my academic years).

I came to Mumbai because my husband Ravi moved here to work at Bombay House and films just happened. I was offered Zubeida, then Gadar and Monsoon Wedding etc and then they just kept coming. I had two teenage children when I began my film career, which just proves that you never know what lies around the corner, if you are ready to take risks, and test your skills in areas unexplored, at any junction of your life.

Today, I find it amusing to be called a film star. I'm still very much the same person whose first love is still theatre, but who enjoys doing films as a parallel career. I'm just lucky that I've managed to work with some great directors, actors and on some wonderful projects, both nationally and internationally.

**How do you leave the actor behind when you step off stage into real life?**

The minute the curtain comes down, the character you inhabited is shed like a second skin and you are yourself again — it's that simple. It's preparing to become someone else which needs far more work!

**Self satisfaction when you write, direct, emote or the audience's ovation?**

Theatre in its totality for me is a process of joy — directing,

acting, rehearsing, composing, designing, interacting with other actors, the audiences' reactions — all of it!

**What are the qualities you love in your children?**

My girls have strength, honesty, intelligence, a sense of independence, discrimination and intelligence and enormous talent in the fields they have both chosen for themselves. And they are both generous and loving.

**Share some life-learnings**

Life-learnings — That nothing can be achieved without hard work. There are no shortcuts. That being true to yourself is the most important thing. That excellence is only possible if you are fuelled by passion. That honesty and moral courage are the most underrated virtues. That living in the moment with complete intensity, giving it your all, is the only way to live. That kindness and compassion must be actively cultivated to be truly human.

**What would you like your legacy to be?**

My legacy would be that I brought up 2 really good human beings who will contribute to society. That I made some small difference in the history of INDIAN theatre, by having taken the road less travelled, to forefront and present Indian writers and Indian stories (many commissioned by us) to audiences both here and across the world, and thereby causing a small seismic shift.

**LSR and its influence on you...**

LSR was our stomping ground. That is where we learnt to become ourselves. Where we discovered ourselves. Where we tread fearlessly to learn and grow, it was the crucible in which we shaped ourselves.

By Vandana Sarin

*History (Hon)*

*Batch of 1977*



## Chhavi Rajawat

Sarpanch, Soda Village

English (Hons), Batch of 1997

### *Sarpanch With An MBA*

*Positive changes can best be made from grassroots level. And what better when you become part of a system that can actually impact policy for the people you are working with.*

*That's what Chhavi Rajawat did. After studying at some of the best institutes across India and armed with an MBA degree plus some serious corporate experience, this amazing ELSA chose to go back to her village Soda (in Tonk District of Rajasthan) to become India's first ever Sarpanch, with an MBA.*

### **Which three words describe you?**

Sensitive, Genuine, Adventurous

### **A city girl or a village girl? What defines you better?**

I am just a girl who has had an opportunity to study in some of the best institutions in India and has only gone back to her roots to work with and for those who deserve a better life. It's as simple as that!

### **What was your journey after graduating from LSR?**

B-School and corporate jobs in media, hospitality, telecom in Mumbai, Delhi and then Jaipur. In 2009, I started E-Quest Horse Riding Academy in Jaipur. In February 2010, I got elected as Sarpanch of Soda, District Tonk, Rajasthan.

### **Your favourite canteen food?**

Sardarji Uncle's samosa!

### **Amazingly, you do not have any political ambitions or affiliations. What are your aims and ambitions for Soda Village?**

My vision is to bring about an integrated development in Soda - thereby creating a model village which could be replicated across rural India. Most importantly, I am looking at raising funds and drawing appropriate expertise to my village.

To answer your question about politics - at the Panchayat level, officially, there is supposed to be no political affiliation which is why it is not considered part of 'mainstream' politics.

### **Tell us about life at LSR?**

I was a part of NSS and took part in some extra-curricular activities and sports like Volley Ball, Target Shooting, Photography and Creative Writing. I cherish the friends I made there. On the fun side, one incident I can clearly recall is sneaking my friend Jyoti Chidambaram, out of the hostel! LSR and the days I spent in Delhi prepared me for the real world.

### **Tell us about your plans for the future?**

After bringing about transparency in the Council Office and providing basic infrastructure in my first term, in the second term, I want to focus on a deeper impact — like improving the quality of education; introducing vocational training; and, improving agricultural practices.

One thing that should resonate well with all ELSAs is that we have recently acquired a girls' college in the village. Unfortunately, it currently runs as a sick unit. I want to focus on providing the best to the young women who come there, so that they can, in turn, positively impact the villages where they come from.

Overall, contemporary politics has a very limited knowledge of the grassroots. Yet, we have a very top-down approach. We need to empower the Panchayats and nudge the government to deliver effectively in our villages.

### **Interviewed by Archana Patni**

*Sociology (Hons),*

*Batch of 2002*



## Shibani Kashyap

*Musician*

*English (Hons), Batch of 1992*

*Elsa Girl ... Always On Top Of Her Game*

*A singer, composer and performer, Shibani is a versatile artist. With her deep-rooted affinity to Western and Indian classical music, Shibani's repertoire spans the entire spectrum — from advertising jingles to pop albums to Hindi film music. Known to be a hugely popular and energetic live performer, Shibani has performed in shows all over the world. She has lately made her foray into acting too.*

**How did LSR prepare you to face the challenges in your chosen field of profession i.e. music?**

LSR's education module is undeniably a reputed one. Alongside my education, I was very actively involved in cultural activities during college days. Both these actually helped me gain confidence and evolve not only as an artist, but also as a person. It helped me to become more articulate and enhanced my skills to communicate with media, fans, public and of course, my audience. During my college days, I participated in a musical called CATS. It was an experience that really helped me mature as a complete performer.

**Is there a stereotype of the 'LSR girl' that amuses or annoys you?**

I think the typical ELSA is always super stylish and a combination of beauty and brains, always on top of her game. Sometimes a bit competitive, which annoys me. But nevertheless, I'm proud of being an ELSA because we are simply THE BEST.

**Share with us an interesting memory of Tarang, the LSR college festival?**

Tarang was the most sought-after college festival. In

fact, we use to really look forward to it. It was the time to party, celebrate, revel and also express our talent on stage. It was an opportunity to interact with students from other colleges like IIT and Delhi University, as otherwise, we led a very sheltered life and were a bit cut-off from other colleges. This was truly the most festive time for all of us. Suddenly, all the plain Janes would be seen dressed-up with full make-up. I, of course, would serenade everyone, especially the handsome boys with my guitar and singing prowess.

**If you had the power to change one thing about your chosen industry, what would it be?**

I really think I'm blessed to be a part of the music industry. I just wish that the artists worked more cohesively as a team and supported each other. If that happened, we could become a power to reckon with, worldwide.

**'Let's give back'. Any thoughts on how this hugely talented and successful alumnae of LSR, spread across the world, can give back?**

I think the best way to give back would be to conduct workshops and deliver guest lectures at the campus and share our experiences. We should try and inspire the young girls who are the future of our country. With such an illustrious alumnae, we can motivate and empower women all over the world. Proud to be an ELSA!

Interviewed By Mumukshu Mohanty  
*Political Science (Hons)*  
*Batch of 1996*

## Sandhya Mridul

*Actress*

*Maths Stats (Hons), Batch of 1990*

**Craziest thing you ever did in  
college.....**

Sign up for Mathematical Statistics  
And then somersault onto stage in  
CATS!

**Mathematics of the Entertainment  
world.....**

It will all add up eventually, if you're  
smart!

**I dare .....**

To not conform

**Inspired by.....**

Every test that life's put my way

**Fashion fades, Style endures.....**

But who you are has nothing to do  
with either!

**Personal growth is about .....**

Courage and compassion

**I use my art form to reach out to .....**

Myself. Every deep dark buried corner  
of my being.

**Girls ...**

Can do it better.

**LSR ....**

Taught me freedom

Interviewed by **Sanjari**

*English (Hons), 1987*





The LSR logo represents the Nine Muses of learning in different postures. The logo highlights women in different positions, rising to glory, and also emphasizes the immense potential in women. This logo was designed by an alumna, **Lakshmi Gopalakrishnan.**

# Become a Member

## Our Growing Community

Welcome back LSR Alumni! ELSAs! As we refer to ourselves.

It was not over when you graduated. Wherever you are, however long it has been since you've connected with college, LSR will always be a part of your life.

Come and join the Alumni Association and connect with your class and batch-mates through alumni events in your city. The ELSA Alumni Roll Call is a powerful and enviable group, comprising of a valuable network of women across the world. Join your local Chapter and tap into this repertoire of wisdom and knowledge through the diverse ELSA network – Career Hub, ELSA Hub, AfterWork Network, TRAVELSA, Conversations & Book Clubs.

Sign up for a Life Membership, and enjoy the multitudinous benefits of being an ELSA.

## Some of our ELSAs





Founded by Megha More (ELSA 2003 batch)



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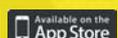
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छोटी पत्ती  
दे कड़कपन



बड़ी पत्ती  
दे स्वाद

पेश है टाटा टी प्रीमियम.

जो हर पैक में दे, दो प्रकार की  
पत्तियों का अनोखा मिश्रण.

इसकी छोटी पत्तियां दे कड़कपन,  
जो जगाए जोश; और इसकी बड़ी पत्तियां दे  
स्वाद, जो दे बेहतरीन ताज़गी.



# Acknowledgements

In the process of putting together the Souvenir and the 3rd Annual Dinner, ELSAs from across the decades came to work together, who might otherwise, have not met each other. Some classy, some sassy, but, each of them blissfully ignorant of one word – a word they unlearned at LSR – the word, 'can't'.

Passionate commitment melded with the spirit of giving, ELSA volunteers rose to support the Souvenir, sitting long hours to ensure no content was left out, relentlessly chasing their fellow ELSAs for interviews, digging out images to ensure that our centrespread was a riot of images, while others scanned the text with hawk-eyed scrutiny.

For the Annual Dinner, ELSAs donated generously, many galvanized others into enrolling as ELSAs to come together, while celebrated alumni provided accessories for the fashion walk, others choreographed the fashion walk, and many sportingly walked the ramp.

ELSAs, our greatest ambassadors, came from all walks of life and converged into 'One ELSA' to bring together the Souvenir and the Annual Dinner, setting the tone for the beginning of the ELSA Movement.

Thank you, volunteers.

## Souvenir Team



Sudeep Kohli



Sanjari Gupta



Madhulika Dant



Vandana Sarin



Varsha Pai



Archana Shekhar



Ganga Krishankumar



Shonali Advani



Monideepa Sahu



Tina Rajan



Sahana Das



Rachna Puri



Rachna Sial



Archana Patni

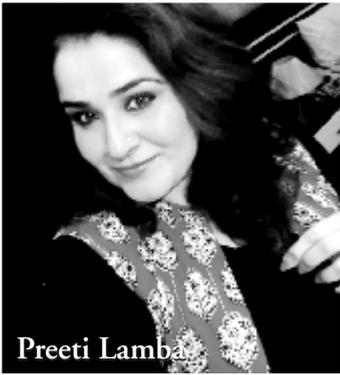


Mumukshu Mohanty



Pratibha Singh

# 3rd Annual Dinner Volunteers



Preeti Lamba



Ritu Mathur



Ramma



Pratima Goel



Rashmi Singh



Samidha Gupta



Sapna kapur mehra



Saumya Vardhan



Royina Grewal



Sarita Arora



Bhavna



Priti Shrivastava



Vidhushi Srikant



Shagorika Das



Kanishka Singhal



Aditi Gupta



Chandni Luthra

*With the stroke of your pen or the kiss of your lipstick,  
leave your memory here for me...*





Jubilant Bhartia Foundation works on Private-Public-People-Partnership model in its efforts to make inclusive growth a reality in its communities.

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For details: visit [www.jubilantbhartiafoundation.com](http://www.jubilantbhartiafoundation.com)

# ELSA

Lady Shri Ram College Alumni Association

A Society registered under the Societies Registration Act

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